

Request for New Proposals: AmeriCorps*VISTA Program



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

390 City Hall
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Saint Paul, MN 55102

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The Office of Mayor Coleman, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) is seeking proposals from organizations interested in hosting an AmeriCorps*VISTA member during the 2010-11 program year. City of Saint Paul VISTA members work to close the education opportunity gap in Saint Paul. The VISTA program's goals are aligned with Mayor Coleman's goal for education, *Ready for School, Ready for Life*. Specifically, the City of Saint Paul VISTA program seeks to achieve two goals:

- 1) Improving the **quality** and variety of learning opportunities available to youth in Saint Paul.
- 2) Increasing **access** to high-quality learning opportunities for all Saint Paul children, especially at-risk and vulnerable youth.

VISTA members contribute to these goals by building capacity at their host organizations, focusing on projects in three program areas:

1. Expanding early childhood education and literacy programs so that all children enter school ready to learn.
2. Enhancing formal and informal learning opportunities for Saint Paul students, including before, during and after school.
3. Informing and preparing students for post-secondary educational and professional opportunities.

2010 Timeline

February 19, 2010	Proposals due to City of Saint Paul VISTA program by 5 PM
March 2010	Applicants notified of proposal status
April 2, 2010	City of Saint Paul VISTA Supervisor Orientation @ City Hall
April – June, 2010	VISTA member recruitment
June 15, 2010*	Recruitment concludes; VISTA member pre-enrollment paperwork due to City of Saint Paul VISTA program
August 3-6, 2010*	VISTA members attend CNCS' Pre-Service Orientation (PSO)
August 9-10, 2010*	VISTA members attend City of Saint Paul VISTA Orientation
August 11, 2010*	VISTA members begin service at their sites

* = Dates are subject to change, depending on PSO schedule determined by CNCS.

On the following pages, you will find the City of Saint Paul VISTA's Request for Proposals 2010. Completed proposals must be submitted by **5:00pm on Friday, February 19, 2010**.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligible agencies include private, public, and faith-based nonprofit organizations; local, state, and federal government agencies; and public, private, and charter schools. Each partnering organization or agency is required to contribute a \$3,000 cost-share payment to the City of Saint Paul VISTA Program. These funds are used to contribute to the living allowance and training of VISTA members, as well as supporting other other program services.

Questions or requests for further information can be directed to:

Caleb Jonas
AmeriCorps*VISTA Program Supervisor
The Office of Mayor Coleman
390 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-8582

Mission and Program Goals

AmeriCorps* VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), the domestic equivalent to the Peace Corps, is a member of the AmeriCorps family of national service programs, administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. VISTA members are charged with erasing poverty by performing "indirect service" that increases the capacity of their host organizations. VISTA members are provided with a modest living allowance and health benefits to support their full-time, full-year commitment to combating poverty.

VISTA Mission

VISTA members work to build permanent infrastructure in organizations to help them more effectively bring individuals and communities out of poverty. VISTA members are prohibited from engaging in direct service, focusing instead on creating systemic change.

Summary of Member Terms, Conditions, and Benefits

VISTA members receive a living allowance (\$11,232 annually, paid bi-weekly), approved personal and sick leave, medical benefits, training, and a choice of an education award (\$4,725) or an end-of-year cash stipend (\$1,200) in exchange for committing to a year of full-time service. VISTA members serve full-time, and must be available for evening and weekend work. Accordingly, they are not permitted to hold part-time jobs or be enrolled in school during their year of service.

Host Organization Requirements

Host sites must be able to direct the project, supervise the VISTA member, and provide necessary administrative support to complete the goals and objectives of the project. Those goals and objectives of the project must be clearly defined and hosts need to be able to demonstrate measurable results.

Host sites need to comply with and/or provide the following:

- A non-refundable, \$3,000 cost-share payment to the City of Saint Paul AmeriCorps* VISTA Program
- Active recruitment, effective interviewing and selection of their own VISTA applicants, with support and approval from VISTA program staff and CNCS.
- Participation in City of Saint Paul VISTA Supervisor orientation and ongoing training
- A designated supervisor who will provide daily supervision and guidance to the VISTA member. This person must be available for frequent communication and to meet with the VISTA regularly to discuss projects, goals, and activities.
- Responsibility for the completion of quarterly reports and semi-annual member performance evaluations.
- A comfortable work environment, including reasonable office space, use of a computer, fax, phone and e-mail access comparable to that of paid staff.
- Meaningful work for the VISTA member in accordance with a site-developed work plan that will be mutually agreed to by the host site, VISTA member, VISTA program staff and CNCS.
- Support for VISTA member's professional development, beyond each VISTA member's \$150 training allowance.
- Active planning for sustaining the project's goals and strategies beyond the VISTA partnership.
- Reimbursement to VISTA member for service-related mileage expenses.
- A signed letter of commitment and memorandum of understanding, bearing the signatures of the VISTA Supervisor as well the host organization's President of the Board of Directors, Executive Director, or highest governing authority.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be judged on a rubric using the following criteria:

1. The extent to which the proposed project supports the goals of **increasing quality and access** of programming and support available to Saint Paul youth.
2. The extent to which the proposed project aligns with one or more of the City of Saint Paul AmeriCorps*VISTA Program's Program Areas.
3. The extent to which the proposed project supports the capacity-building and anti-poverty goals of the federal AmeriCorps*VISTA program.
4. The extent to which the proposed project identifies a compelling community need, and the extent to which the VISTA project is an appropriate method of addressing the identified community need.
5. The ability and commitment of the organization to provide a VISTA member with a supportive work environment.
6. The organization's ability and commitment to sustain the project's efforts beyond the partnership.
7. The specificity, comprehensiveness, and clarity of all components of the proposed project plan.

Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

Proposals must be completed electronically, printed, signed and received by 5 pm on Friday, February 19, 2010.

Address:

Caleb Jonas
The Office of Mayor Coleman
390 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

- **Any submissions received after 5pm on Friday, February 19th will be reviewed at the discretion of program staff, and are not guaranteed to receive full consideration.**

Questions should be addressed to Caleb Jonas, AmeriCorps*VISTA Program Supervisor at 651-266-8582 or caleb.jonas@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Host Site Application 2010

Complete application electronically by filling in each gray box, and completing a project plan. Then, please print, sign, and submit by mail.

I. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Organization Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

URL _____

II. VISTA APPLICATION INFORMATION

A. Applicant Type _____

A. State Government B. Local Government C. Federal Government D. State Association
E. Church F. Private Non-profit F. Tribal Government H. Community Action Agency I. School J. Local
Affiliation of National Organization K. Other, specify _____

B. Does your organization currently host any AmeriCorps members, or has it in the past?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, when? _____ And for how many years? _____

C. Please describe the work of these AmeriCorps members (if applicable).

C. Number of VISTA members your organization is requesting _____

***Note: Most City of Saint Paul VISTA projects receive one VISTA member per year.**

D. List the staff person who will act as the VISTA Supervisor.

***Note: This person must be available for daily supervision. He/she will have frequent communication with the VISTA member to discuss projects, goals, and actions.**

Name, Title _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone _____

Amount of time to be spent weekly in VISTA supervision: _____

III. NARRATIVE

1. Describe your organization's mission. Address how your proposed VISTA project aligns with the missions and goals of your organization, AmeriCorps*VISTA and City of Saint Paul VISTA. Discuss the population your organization serves.

2. Identify and discuss the community need your VISTA project will address. Describe how your VISTA project will address this need.

3. Describe the job description, qualifications, availability and management style of the VISTA supervisor.

4. Describe specifically how your site will ensure that a VISTA member is successfully welcomed, supervised, and supported throughout their year of service. Include plans for on-site orientation, training/professional development opportunities, integration with staff, and successful supervision.

5. VISTAs work to build capacity within their assigned organizations. The systems and partnerships developed by VISTA members lead to sustainable changes within organizations and communities. We know from experience that successful sustainability efforts include the VISTA member and the service site.

Describe steps your organization will take to ensure that your VISTA project's achievements and community impact outlive your partnership with City of Saint Paul VISTA.

IV. VISTA Project Plan

The work of each VISTA member is guided by a project plan developed by each VISTA host site, and approved by City of St. Paul VISTA and CNCS program staff. VISTA sites are asked to report on their progress toward completion of the VISTA project plan quarterly. This data is then aggregated at the City, State, and Federal level and used to report on the success of AmeriCorps*VISTA as a whole.

Project Plan Guidelines

Each AmeriCorps*VISTA Project Plan must be composed of one or more action plans, each of which is designed to meet a specific community need. Each action plan must include one more performance milestones, which describe specific, measurable goals.

Below, you will find a list of instructions for each field in the Project Plan template found on the following page. Please note: each project plan can contain multiple action plans, and each action plan can contain multiple performance milestones.

Please note: The City of Saint Paul expects its partnership with each host organization to last for 3 year-long VISTA terms. Please design your project plan to reflect the potential three-year duration of the VISTA partnership.

If your site is selected to receive a VISTA member, City of St. Paul staff will work with you to further develop your Project Plan, and to revise it annually as appropriate.

Guide to Project Plan Terminology

- **Action Plan:** A comprehensive, results-based plan to address a community need.
- **Community Need:** Describe the specific need that is addressed through this Action Plan.
Ex. According to a recent Survey, only 30% of eligible citizens utilize Capital Workforce resources.
- **Goal Statement:** Describe the impact your action plan will have in addressing the community need you identified. This statement should cover the typical 3-year VISTA cycle.
Ex. Vista member will implement a job and workforce training program to recruit 200 clients in year 1, 300 in year 2, and 500 in year 3. Clients who complete training will be more likely to gain and keep employment, improving the quality and quantity of St. Paul's workforce, and ensuring more employment opportunities for St Paul residents.
- **Performance Milestone:** Describe what you hope to achieve in a particular activity area over the course of a 12-month period. Each milestone should be directly related to this action plan's goal statement, and should include a specific quantity (number, percentage, etc.) **Please note: an action plan can contain multiple milestones.**
Ex. VISTA member will raise \$150,000 to support and maintain job and workforce training program for 3 years.
- **Planned Period of Achievement:** Indicate by what month of your VISTA's service you expect this milestone to be achieved.
Ex. Year 1, Month 12.
- **Indicator:** Indicate what unit you will track or measure to determine if your milestone has been achieved (i.e. individuals served, survey respondents, website visits, grants submitted).
Ex. Dollars secured.
- **Target:** Enter the same number from your performance milestone.
Ex. \$150,000.
- **Instrument:** Enter the method by which accomplishment of target milestone will be determined (i.e. administration of surveys, collection of attendance rosters, documentation of partnership agreements)
Ex. Grant attainment letters and written commitments of individual gifts.
- **Activities:** List, as specifically as you can, individual steps that your VISTA member might take to ensure the completion of each performance milestone.
Ex. VISTA will identify 5 most appropriate foundations to support this project.
- **Planned Period of Achievement:** Identify the month of VISTA service during which each activity will be completed.
Ex. Year 1, Month 1.
- **Status/Progress:** Leave this column blank. It will be used for your site to report on its progress each program quarter.

ACTION PLAN 1

Community Need:

Goal Statement:

Performance Milestone 1:

Planned Period of Achievement:

Indicator:

Target:

Instrument:

Activities	Planned period of achievement	Status/Progress

Performance Milestone 2:

Planned Period of Achievement:

Indicator:

Target:

Instrument:

Activities	Planned period of achievement	Status/Progress

ACTION PLAN 2

Community Need:

Goal Statement:

Performance Milestone 1:

Planned Period of Achievement:

Indicator:

Target:

Instrument:

Activities	Planned period of achievement	Status/Progress

Performance Milestone 2:

Planned Period of Achievement:

Indicator:

Target:

Instrument:

Activities	Planned period of achievement	Status/Progress

IV. CERTIFICATION

Submission of this application does not guarantee that City of Saint Paul VISTA will assign one or more VISTA members to your organization, nor does it compel your organization to accept any such resources.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SIGNATURE

DATE

VISTA SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE

DATE